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Policy Update: January 2021

SRCD's *Policy Update* monitors policy developments in Washington, D.C., including federal priorities for developmental science, and legislation and programs relevant to child development. It also contains information on conferences and training opportunities, new reports, and requests for comments. *Policy Update* also highlights the work and experiences of SRCD Policy Fellows in the column *Spotlight on the SRCD Policy Fellow*.

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SRCD Child and Family Policy News

ICYMI: Social Policy Report on Foster Care: How We Can, and Should, Do More for Maltreated Children

SRCD recently released a *Social Policy Report* by Drs. Sarah A. Font and Elizabeth T. Gershoff, "Foster Care: How We Can, and Should, Do More for Maltreated Children." This report describes how state and federal policies have shaped children's experiences in foster care and recognizes when policies fail to foster the safety and well-being of children in foster care.

Legislative Branch Updates

FY 2021 Appropriations and COVID-19 Relief Update

FY 2021 Appropriations and COVID-19 Relief Bill Signed into Law

On December 27, then-President Donald Trump signed H.R. 133, "Consolidated Appropriations Act, 2021" into law, a $1.4 trillion FY 2021 spending package that funds the government through September 30, 2021 (the end of Fiscal Year 2021). H.R. 133 includes all 12 annual appropriations bills for FY 2021.

Following a series of conversations between Congressional lawmakers and White House officials, the package includes $900 billion in funding for COVID-19 relief. For more information about COVID-19 relief provisions, read the House Committee on Appropriations' summary of COVID-19 provisions in H.R. 133 . Of note, the passage of H.R. 133 marks the first COVID-19 relief bill passed by Congress since the Senate and U.S. House of Representatives passed the "Paycheck Protection Program and Health Care Enhancement Act " last April.

H.R. 133 agency highlights of particular interest to SRCD members include the:

- *National Institutes of Health (NIH)*: NIH received approximately $42.9 billion, a $1.25 billion increase over FY 2020. Please find allocations for a subset of NIH agencies below:
    - *Eunice Kennedy Shriver* National Institute of Child Health and Human Development (NICHD): $1.59 billion.
    - National Institute of Mental Health (NIMH): $2.1 billion
    - National Institute on Drug Abuse (NIDA): $1.48 billion

- *National Science Foundation (NSF)*: NSF received approximately $8.5 billion, a $208.4 million increase over FY 2020.
- *Institute of Education Sciences (IES)*, U.S. Department of Education: IES received approximately $642.5 million in the FY 2021 bill, a $19 million increase over FY 2020.
- *National Institute of Justice (NIJ)*, U.S. Department of Justice: NIJ received approximately $37 million, a $1 million increase over FY 2020.

If you are interested in learning more about the FY 2021 Appropriations process, additional analysis of FY 2021 Appropriations is available on the Consortium of Social Science Associations' (COSSA) website. Please note the passage of H.R. 133 marks the end of the FY 2021 appropriations process.

Executive Branch Updates

Highlights

President Joe Biden and Vice President Kamala Harris Sworn in

On January 20, President Joe Biden and Vice President Kamala Harris were sworn into office. Last week, President Biden issued several executive actions to provide families and businesses with economic relief during the COVID-19 pandemic and address compound crises, signaling the new Administration's immediate priorities.

The executive actions address a vast array of policy issues: from an executive order on facilitating the reopening and continuing operations of schools and early childhood education providers, to an executive order on data-driven responses to COVID-19, to a memorandum that protects and preserves the Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA) program. For a comprehensive list of recent executive actions, visit WhiteHouse.gov.

President Joe Biden Announces White House Science Team Members

On January 15, then-President-elect Joe Biden announced the members of the White House science team, the team that will help the Biden and Harris administration "...confront some of the biggest crises and challenges of our time, from climate change and the impact of technology on society to pandemics, racial

inequity and the current historic economic downturn." President Biden's White House science team members include:

- Dr. Frances H. Arnold, Ph.D., and Dr. Maria Zuber, Ph.D. Drs. Arnold and Zuber will be external Co-Chairs of the President's Council of Advisors on Science and Technology (PCAST).
- Dr. Francis Collins, M.D., Ph.D., Director, National Institutes of Health (NIH). Dr. Collins will continue to serve as Director of NIH.
- Narda Jones, J.D., Legislative Affairs Director, Office of Science and Technology Policy.
- Kei Koizumi, M.A., Chief of Staff, Office of Science and Technology Policy.
- Dr. Eric Lander, Presidential Science Advisor-designate and Biden's Director of the Office of Science and Technology Policy nominee.
- Dr. Alondra Nelson, Ph.D., Deputy Director for Science and Society, Office of Science and Technology Policy. Of note, Dr. Nelson is the President of the Social Science Research Council and Harold F. Linder Professor at the Institute for Advanced Study.

According to President Biden, "Science will always be at the forefront of my administration — and these world-renowned scientists will ensure everything we do is grounded in science, facts, and the truth. Their trusted guidance will be essential as we come together to end this pandemic, bring our economy back, and pursue new breakthroughs to improve the quality of life of all Americans. Their insights will help America chart a brighter future, and I am grateful they answered the call to serve."

Watch then-President-elect Biden's announcement to learn more about the White House science team.

ACF Shares New Research and Evaluation Agenda

On January 12, the Administration for Children and Families (ACF), within the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, released the "ACF Research and Evaluation Agenda." According to ACF, "this research and evaluation agenda draws upon the learning agendas being developed with ACF program offices and highlights priority questions; key past, ongoing, and future research and evaluation efforts; and major stakeholder engagement activities for each program."

The ACF Research and Evaluation Agenda includes research and evaluation activities in nine ACF program areas:

- Adolescent Pregnancy Prevention and Sexual Risk Avoidance
- Child Care
- Child Support Enforcement
- Child Welfare
- Head Start
- Health Profession Opportunity Grants
- Healthy Marriage and Responsible Fatherhood
- Home Visiting
- Welfare and Family Self-Sufficiency

Read ACF's blog post about the research agenda to learn more about this resource.

ACF Seeks Input on Research and Dissemination Priorities for the 2015 Cohort of Healthy Marriage and Responsible Fatherhood Grantees

On December 29, the Administration for Children and Families (ACF), within the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, announced ACF is seeking input on data collection efforts for the Healthy Marriage and Responsible Fatherhood (HMRF) grant program by the 2015 cohort.

ACF seeks "input on (1) research topics of interest to stakeholders to guide the analysis; and (2) preferred format to present the final result." Read the announcement to learn more about this opportunity and interested parties should consider submitting a comment before the **January 29, 2021 deadline.**

NSF Solicitation: Future of Work at the Human-Technology Frontier

The National Science Foundation (NSF) released a solicitation titled the "Future of Work at the Human-Technology Frontier: Core Research (FW-HTF)." In line with "NSF's 10 Big Ideas," this solicitation fosters the inclusion of diverse disciplinary perspectives to support convergence research. The solicitation notes, "the overarching vision of this program is to support multi-disciplinary research to sustain economic competitiveness, to promote worker well-being, lifelong and pervasive learning, and quality of life, and to illuminate the emerging social and economic context and drivers of innovations that are shaping the future of jobs and work."

Read the solicitation for more information about this opportunity. The full proposal deadline is **March 23, 2021.**

NSF Dear Colleague Letter: Interdisciplinary Frontiers of Understanding the Brain

On December 14, the National Science Foundation (NSF) released a Dear Colleague Letter (DCL) on "Interdisciplinary Frontiers of Understanding the Brain." The DCL seeks community input on a specific set of questions. Please note feedback will inform future NSF investments. Read the full Dear Colleague Letter for more information about this opportunity. Interested parties should consider submitting a response by **March 31, 2021.**

NSF Dear Colleague Letter: Broadening Participation in STEM Entrepreneurship and Innovation (BPINNOVATE)

The National Science Foundation (NSF) issued a Dear Colleague Letter (DCL) on broadening participation in STEM entrepreneurship and innovation, welcoming proposals that identify strategies to mitigate barriers and improve access to STEM entrepreneurship and innovation for individuals from diverse backgrounds. The DCL notes, "To increase national competitiveness and broaden opportunity for our Nation's vast and diverse population of potential entrepreneurs, we seek greater knowledge of how disability, race and ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation, nationality, geography, and other factors relate to innovation and entrepreneurship. This DCL encourages investigators to develop comprehensive studies that use the intersectionality of identities as a framework to examine interventions and phenomena within the innovation and entrepreneurial space and invites submission to the NSF Science of Science program."

Read the full Dear Colleague Letter for more information about this opportunity. Interested parties should consider submitting a proposal to the Science of Science program by **February 9, 2021**.

Federal Reports

New Reports and Briefs from the Office of Planning, Research and Evaluation

Several new publications are available from the Office of Planning, Research and Evaluation (OPRE), Administration for Children and Families (ACF), U.S. Department of Health and Human Services:

(1) *The Psychological Costs of Seeking Financial Help From a Social Services Agency.* This report, produced by a Behavioral Interventions Scholars (BIS) program grantee, examines the extent to which people in Pennsylvania facing financial hardship delay seeking social services and potential reasons for this delay.

(2) *Supplemental Security Income (SSI) for infants in the NICU: What are the barriers to application and how can we reduce them?* This report, produced by a Behavioral Interventions Scholars (BIS) program grantee, identifies key barriers that prevent eligible families from applying for SSI and proposes potential solutions based on behavioral economics.

(3) *A Program Model for Encouraging Sexually Experienced Youth to Cease Sexual Activity*. This report presents a program model for sexual risk cessation. The model describes program inputs—the overall design, program features, and the infrastructure needed to support implementation—and implementation outputs—that is, aspects of staff, service delivery, and youth responsiveness that can be assessed to know whether implementation occurred as expected. In addition, the program model specifies youth outcomes it intends to affect and presents considerations regarding the context of implementation.

(4) *Incorporating Trauma-Informed Care in Adolescent Pregnancy Prevention (APP) Programs: Significance and Resources for Grantees.* This report describes how a history of trauma can impact youth's well-being and presents principles of trauma-informed care that APP staff can incorporate into their programming to meet the needs of youth with trauma histories. It also provides a tool for staff to assess their use of such care and a list of resources and organizations for those seeking more information.

(5) *Success Sequence: A Synthesis of the Literature.* The success sequence is a term that refers to a series of milestones in life that are associated with escaping poverty and joining the middle class. This report presents findings from a literature review which sought to summarize (1) how researchers and commentators have variously defined the success sequence, (2) research on the individual milestones that make up the success sequence, and (3) research on the relationship between the success sequence milestones and economic outcomes in adulthood.

(6) *Factors Influencing Youth Sexual Activity: Conceptual Models for Sexual Risk Avoidance and Cessation*. This report presents two complementary conceptual models—one for sexual risk avoidance and a second for sexual risk cessation—that aim to guide efforts to prevent youth risk behaviors and promote optimal health.

New Reports and Briefs from the Office of the Assistant Secretary for Planning and Evaluation

Several new publications are available from the Office of the Assistant Secretary for Planning and Evaluation (ASPE), U.S. Department of Health and Human Services:

(1) *Treatment for Opioid Use Disorder (OUD) May Reduce Substantiated Cases of Child Abuse and Neglect*. This report examines how availability of buprenorphine, an effective treatment for OUD, predicts certain child maltreatment caseloads in 25 states.

(2) *Housing Instability for Noncustodial Parents: Policy Considerations*. This report and infographic present estimates of the percentage of noncustodial parents who are eligible for and receive housing assistance. The report also identifies opportunities for child support agencies, public housing agencies, Continuums of Care, and other partners to further consider and address the needs of this population.

New Reports and Briefs from the Institute of Education Sciences

Several new publications are available from the National Center for Education Statistics, Institute of Education Sciences (IES), U.S. Department of Education:

(1) *Baccalaureate and Beyond (B&B:08/18): First Look at the 2018 Employment and Educational Experiences of 2007–08 College Graduates*. This report and brief describe outcomes of 2007–08 bachelor's degree recipients in 2018, about 10 years after graduation. Outcomes include financial well-being, student loan borrowing and repayment, postbaccalaureate enrollment, employment history, earnings, job characteristics, and teaching status.

(2) *Virginia High School Graduates' Career and Technical Education (CTE) Credentials: Top Credentials Over Time and Across Student Groups*. This report examines the CTE credentials Virginia high school graduates most commonly earned from 2011 through 2017. It also looked at the top 10 credentials earned by 2017 Standard diploma graduates across a variety of student subgroups, including English learner students,

economically disadvantaged students, students with disabilities, and racial/ethnic subgroups.

(3) *Exploring Teachers' Influence on Student Success in an Online Biology Course*. This report examines the amount of variation in course completion, students' final exam scores, and time to completion that is attributable to the influence of teachers for an online high school biology course offered by Florida Virtual School.

(4) *District Changes in Student Achievement and Local Practice under Georgia's District and School Flexibility Policy*. Georgia instituted a flexibility policy in 2007 that provided districts with waivers from state education rules, provisions, and guidelines. Granted waivers and annual accountability targets are agreed upon in district performance contracts with the state. This report analyzes how districts' achievement changed after the start of their performance contracts and factors related to those changes.

(5) *Participation in State-Funded Prekindergarten in Oklahoma*. This report presents the percentages of first-time public school kindergarten students who participated in Oklahoma's state-funded preK program in the prior year for five cohorts (2014/15 through 2018/19). The study also used multivariate statistical models to estimate relationships between student characteristics, the local availability of preK options (measured as estimated travel time), and students' participation in state-funded preK.

(6) *An Approach to Using Student and Teacher Data to Understand and Predict Teacher Shortages*. This report describes an approach to identifying patterns of teacher shortages that was collaboratively developed by the Missouri Department of Elementary and Secondary Education and the Regional Educational Laboratory Central.

(7) *The Effects of Expanding Pell Grant Eligibility for Short Occupational Training Programs: Results from the Experimental Sites Initiative*. This report examines whether two experimental expansions to Pell Grant eligibility, piloted between 2012 and 2017, were effective. The first experiment allowed income-eligible students with a bachelor's degree, not normally eligible for Pell Grants, to obtain them for short-term occupational training programs. The second experiment allowed income-eligible students to obtain Pell Grants for very short-term programs lasting as little as eight weeks, under the normal minimum of 15 weeks of instruction.

(8) *Professional Learning Community: Emergent Literacy*. This tool aims to build the capacity of preschool educators to provide 3- to 5-year-old children evidence-based emergent literacy instruction.

U.S. Federal Funding Opportunities

The January 2021 FFO lists over 100 funding opportunities for research, evaluation, and dissemination. Below we highlight a few funding opportunities from this month's FFO:

(1) An Administration for Children and Families (ACF) funding opportunity to support dissertation research by advanced graduate students who are working in partnership with Head Start programs and with faculty mentors. **Applications are due by February 23, 2021.**

(2) A Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) funding opportunity to conduct Special Interest Projects (SIPs) to design, test, evaluate, disseminate and translate effective applied public health prevention research on interventions (i.e., programs, practices, policies, or strategies) and tools developed in real-world settings to address the leading causes of illness, disabilities, and death in the United States. **Applications are due by February 24, 2021.**

(3) A Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) funding opportunity for research that will help expand and advance our understanding about what works to prevent violence that impacts children and youth, collectively referred to as Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs), including child abuse and neglect, teen dating violence, sexual violence, youth violence, and exposure to adult intimate partner violence. **Applications are due by March 22, 2021.**

(4) A National Institutes of Health (NIH) funding opportunity to create a consortium of research sites in service of the nationwide, multi-site, multi-modal, longitudinal cohort HEALthy Brain and Child Development (HBCD) Study to prospectively examine brain and behavioral development from birth through childhood, including an emphasis on understanding the impact of in utero substance exposure on outcomes. **Applications are due by March 31, 2021.**

Read about these and other funding opportunities.